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SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 9 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: JOINT COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE
AND TRADE, RESUMPTION OF NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM, EXECUTION OF
PLA OFFICER

BEIJING 00003500 001.6 OF 002

11. Key points at the September 9 afternoon MFA press briefing were:

-- Vice Premier Wang Qishan will visit the United States next week to discuss bilateral trade issues with U.S. officials as part of the Sino-U.S. Joint Committee on Commerce and Trade (JCCT).

-- Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei is in contact with his Six-Party Talks counterparts on the issue of North Korea's supposed resumption of its nuclear program and the next steps for the Six-Party Talks process. China urges all parties to show "flexibility," to "meet each other half-way," to "make joint efforts" and to "implement the remaining tasks of the Second Phase."

-- The Spokesman had "no information" regarding reports of the recent execution of PLA Lieutenant Dai Yibiao.

Joint Committee on Commerce and Trade

12. At the September 9 regular MFA press briefing, spokesperson Jiang Yu announced that Vice Premier Wang Qishan will visit the United States next week to discuss bilateral trade issues with U.S. officials as part of the Sino-U.S. Joint Committee on Commerce and Trade. Jiang added that Wang will co-chair the meeting, taking place in Los Angeles on September 17, with U.S. Trade Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez and U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab.

Resumption of North Korea's Nuclear Program

13. Asked if China were concerned about the reported resumption of North Korea's nuclear program, Jiang said that Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei has been in contact with his Six-Party counterparts to discuss this issue and the future direction of the Six-Party Talks. She said that China believes that the progress reached so far has "not come easily" and should be "cherished" by all parties. She added that all parties should remain in contact, show "flexibility," "meet each other half-way," "make joint efforts" to ensure the "proper solution" and "implement the remaining tasks of the Second Phase." Only then, she added, will the parties be heading in the "right direction."

North Korea's 60th anniversary

14. Jiang said China congratulates North Korea on its 60th anniversary. When asked how China has benefited from having North Korea as its neighbor for the past 60 years, Jiang said that China

and North Korea have been "good neighbors," that China deals with all of its neighbors through the principle of "peaceful coexistence" and that China hopes to maintain its relationship with North Korea in the future. When asked by another reporter to confirm Kim Jong-il's deteriorating health, she added that she had "not heard" reports that he was sick.

Execution of PLA Lieutenant

¶15. When asked how a PLA officer, Lieutenant Dai Yibiao, could legally be executed for spying for Taiwan, considered a part of China, Jiang said she had "no information."

Chinese Consulate in Kolkata

¶16. In response to a question from an Indian journalist regarding China's goals for its new Consulate in Kolkata, given the disputed areas in Arunachal Pradesh, Jiang said that during Foreign Minister Yang's recent trip to India, Yang had stressed that the new Consulate would "bring more friendly exchanges" to the region and that this type of bilateral exchange was welcome.

Pakistan's New President

¶17. China extends its congratulations to Pakistan's new President Asif Ali Zardari, said Jiang. She noted that China believes Pakistan will continue to maintain social stability and economic development under his leadership, and that the Sino-Pakistani strategic cooperative partnership will continue to achieve new heights.

Visit of Ecuador's Vice President

BEIJING 00003500 002.4 OF 002

¶18. China is pleased with the visit of Vice President of Ecuador Lenin Moreno who led the Ecuadorian delegation to the Paralympics, said Jiang. She added that China's policy is to carry out cooperation with other countries in light of "equality and mutual benefit" and that China hoped such cooperation was "beneficial to both sides."

RANDT